

The Scranton Tribune

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LIVY S. RICHARD, Editor. O. F. BYRNE, Business Manager. New York Office: 150 Nassau St. S. S. VREELAND, Sole Agent for Foreign Advertising.

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When space will permit, The Tribune is always glad to print short letters from its friends dealing on current topics, but its rule is that these must be signed, for publication, by the writer's real name, and the condition precedent to acceptance is that all contributions shall be subject to editorial revision.

TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, FEBRUARY 21, 1900.

It is announced on good authority that the supporters of Senator Quay's cause in the senate intend soon to force a show of hands. It is high time, it is due to the people of Pennsylvania that they should know where they are at.

Thirty Years of Expansion.

THE ATTENTION of our readers is directed to the statistical table elsewhere, showing the marvelous results of "Thirty Years of American Expansion." This table was prepared from official sources at the instance of Secretary Gage, for use by him in a speech delivered last evening in Chicago; but its value is so manifest as focusing the nation's achievements during the present generation that we have put it in large type so that no reader can overlook it.

If the reader will run his eye down the column showing the percentages of increase or decrease in the three decades he will observe only three minus signs, two of which are in the nation's favor. There has been a decline of 21 per cent. in the average freight rate, per ton per mile, of goods hauled by the steam railroads; and a decrease of 62 per cent. in the imports of manufactured goods of iron and steel; and no one would have it otherwise. The decrease of 44 per cent. in the tonnage of American vessels engaged in foreign trade is the sole item of discouragement comprehended within the extraordinary exhibit, and congress is today considering measures of remedy.

By study of the plus signs the intelligent reader can perceive very clearly why expansion of territory and political influence is a necessary sequel of this amazing home growth.

And now, according to reports, the Democratic revolutionists in Kentucky threaten to bring an indictment against Governor Taylor for the murder of Goshel and force him to a trial before a packed jury and a prejudiced court. It remains to be seen what there is in this threat. The attempt to execute it, however, would be pretty sure to mean trouble in allopathic doses.

President Truesdale Re-elected.

A HOMELY but very expressive address says that the proof of the pudding lies in the eating. The figures presented to the stockholders of the D. T. & W. Railroad company in the first annual report of the new management explain very satisfactorily why there has not been a moult since President Truesdale took hold that his reelection was in any danger.

The conversion of a half-million-dollar deficit into nearly a two-million-dollar surplus over and above the regular dividend reflects partly a more prosperous general condition of business; but it is simply fair to add that it also represents in large degree the new life and broader ideas introduced by the Truesdale management. These young men have come out of the west with their lungs full of ozone and have breathed into a railway system which had fogged along the energy that has, in a twelve-month, carried it to the very forefront of the sharp competition prevalent in the east. They have done this by getting right down to the task of introducing modern economies and treating patrons, not as necessary evils, but as men and women to be pleased.

It has necessarily followed that in the rush of this extraordinary performance some things have been done which should not have been done, and vice versa. These matters will doubtless soon adjust themselves. The first year's work was somewhat experimental. But the lines of policy are now more accurately defined and comprehended, and there will be a greater margin of time to give to the smoothing out of angles.

The congratulations which the "new management" people are today receiving have been well earned by the hardest of hard work and none should begrudge them.

The London war office evidently does not propose to give out any more news that will be subject to adverse revision.

The Stage.

THE REV. DR. N. D. HILLS, successor of Henry Ward Beecher and Dr. Lyman Abbott as pastor of Plymouth church, said in a sermon preached on Sunday last: "We hear a great deal about the drama of life. It has become, not a great exposition of intellect, but a degrading exhibition of a thing which has lost the last vestige of womanhood, a victim of her own sin and man's selfish, licentiousness. The stage is filled with all manner of parasites who minister to the eyes and passions, without sufficient brains to interpret Shakespeare, Goldsmith, or any of the great teachers who taught through the wonderful parables of the stage. I would rather black boots; it would be something honest."

As if to justify Dr. Hills' condemnation of the stage, the New York Sun of yesterday contained the following: "Police Inspector Thompson visited Wallace's theatre last night with a stenographer to secure evidence that 'Sappho' is an immoral play. After the play he said: 'I went there to get evidence and I got it.' Assistant District Attorney Daniel O'Reilly was at the

play and after the performance said: 'What I saw tonight is enough for me. I think the production a clear violation of the law and I intend to take the matter to the grand jury. I consider that we have sufficient evidence to stop the performance.'

Of course plays like "Sappho" are not more representative of the drama as a whole than courtesans are representative of womanhood. They are the exceptions, not the rule. At the same time, it is undeniable that the stage would be the better for a thorough cleaning out. When there is talk in wide open New York of turning the police on a performance the necessity for purification must, indeed, be great.

Mr. Macrum says he has the documents to prove that British officials tampered with his official mail. The state department says he never preferred a complaint before it. Congress had adopted a resolution calling for the facts and this is Mr. Macrum's chance. If there has been any funny business in South Africa, it is not too late to demand proper satisfaction from the offenders.

Naval Prospects.

THE COMMISSIONING yesterday of the new battleship Kearsage adds to our navy the best fighting machine it has yet had. The Kearsage's sister ship, the Kentucky, is expected to be ready for service early in April. Three other battle ships of like dimensions, the Alabama, Illinois and Wisconsin, are to be ready within the year, making five ships in all, larger, faster and better armed than the Oregon. In addition, three other battleships, to be called the Maine, Missouri and Ohio, have been contracted for and will be completed within two to three years. These three ships are to be even faster and larger than the five preceding ones; and following them are to come the Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Georgia, 13,500 ton ships, with 20-knot speed and regular armaments of twelve-inch and rapid fire guns.

Here, altogether, are eleven powerful battleships equal to anything afloat which in the course of a very few years will augment our navy, not to speak of the three armored cruisers, the West Virginia, Nebraska and California, 22-knot boats with the gun power of ordinary battleships, or the six protected cruisers of the Raleigh type, having fine rapid-fire guns, which are in prospect. The completion of this programme will place the navy of the United States in point of effectiveness very close to the top of the list; so close, in fact, that if subsequent congresses shall do their duty in voting money and supplies to keep the naval equipment up to date there will be little reason to fear the hostility of any foreign power.

With a navy like this, in the hands of skilled officers and men, it is ridiculous to hold out for land fortifications at the entrances to the Nicaragua canal.

New York furnishes an example of the evils of amateur hypnotism in the case of a young man who, as a result of having posed as a subject for a hypnotist, now suffers from spasms almost daily from which there seems to be no relief. In the majority of instances about us, where alleged hypnotic tonifery is usually a scam for the entertainment of people prepared to laugh at idiotic performances, little harm comes from sittings, but genuine hypnotism in the hands of the ignorant is an element of danger that should be avoided.

Regulating Corporations.

A BILL HAS BEEN introduced at Albany to conform with Governor Roosevelt's idea upon the subject of the proper remedy for trust abuses, and it is worthy of general study. Framed by Prof. Jenks, of Cornell, after consultation with eminent authorities representing various shades of opinion, this bill, known as the Brackett bill, from the name of the senator who presented it before the legislature, may be taken as representing the most that can be done at present in a state like New York to protect the public by law from the exactions of dishonestly managed corporations.

The act applies to all corporations save such as conduct a banking, insurance, railroad or other transportation business. Every corporation organized under the act must maintain a registered office and agent in the state, where the stock books and transfer books shall be open to the inspection of all bona fide stockholders. No provision creating and regulating the powers of the corporation or directors of the stock company shall be valid unless inserted in the certificate of incorporation. Two-thirds of the stockholders must vote in favor of increasing the capital stock. Where a corporation proposes to change its business or creates new classes of stock, a vote of four-fifths of the stockholders of each class shall be necessary to approve of the same; and the corporation, if requested to do so by a dissenting stockholder, must buy his stock at an appraised value.

At least one of the directors of a corporation must be a resident of the state. Each corporation shall have one or more auditors, who shall be chosen by the stockholders at their annual meeting, and who shall not be a director. A stockholder shall be entitled, at any time, to information regarding salaries paid by the corporation, together with a statement of all contracts or agreements in which any officer of the corporation may be interested, either as a contracting party with the corporation or as an officer or stockholder in any other company. At the annual meeting any shareholder shall have access to the directors' minutes. Every share of stock shall be subject to the payment of its par value in cash unless before the stock is issued a contract shall be filed in the registered office of the company fully and truthfully disclosing in detail the consideration for which the stock is issued, whether for property, service or otherwise. In case any stock is issued for consideration other than cash each share of such stock shall have stamped across its face a statement that it was issued in accordance with the contract and the proportion of stock so issued. Where the whole

capital of a corporation shall not have been paid in and the capital paid is insufficient to satisfy its debts, each stockholder shall be required to pay on each share held by him his proportion of the amount necessary to satisfy the debts.

No loan shall be made to a stockholder by a corporation in which he is interested. Any corporation shall have the power to hold the stock or securities of other corporations. No corporation shall make dividends except from the net profits arising from its business. A strict provision will prevent the issuing of fraudulent prospectuses or advertisements, so as to protect investors. Every promoter intending to have a fiduciary relation toward a company in which he is engaged in promoting, and he is not allowed to sell his own property to a company unless the shareholders are made fully aware of the transaction, and he is not to retain any money or stock received by him in connection with the promotion of the company, except with the consent of the stockholders. Accurate books of accounts are to be kept and the shareholders' balance sheet is to be mailed to each stockholder annually. Complete annual reports are required to be filed by these corporations with the secretary of state, the report to include the stockholders' balance sheet. Any two or more corporations organized under this act may consolidate, and a stockholder dissenting from such merger may compel the company to buy his stock at a price to be fixed by three appraisers appointed by the court. An inducement to existing corporations to re-organize on the new basis, the organization tax is reduced from one-eighth to one-fiftieth of one per cent.

Governor Roosevelt, who intends to push the bill, relies upon public opinion to force such re-organization once the bill is enacted and generally understood. Its provisions seem absolutely fair.

John Wanamaker's reform paper, the North American, prevailed upon a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Senoholes, to "earnest solicitation," to attend Mrs. Langtry's representation of "The Degenerates" the other night and the good gentleman is properly shocked to the extent of a column in the reform paper. Just what particular degree of credit redounds to the journal, the minister, the public or anybody else by this performance is not explained, but as an advertisement for a very immoral play the method of the North American may be considered a shining success.

Binghamton is soon to have an art gallery. The citizens feel that a municipality known as the "Parlor City" should have something more educational in the line of art within its limits than cigar-box labels and twentieth century calendars.

The article in yesterday's Tribune headed "Dying Century Passed in Review" should have been credited to the Chicago Times-Herald. The omission of the credit line was accidental.

The war correspondent seems to be disposed to allow the Manila end of the cable to cool off.

In Woman's Realm

A NUMBER of unique informal entertainments suitable for the celebration of Washington's birthday will be given tomorrow at Scranton, by the persistence of the magazines and the historical novelist as horrible examples, we are almost ready to assert that we are tired of the Father of His Country. If only the people who must write about something were content to let the dead rest in peace with the clamor of the hats which crowned them in life still clamoring over their graves, we might be more enthusiastic over these anniversary. But the biographer and the novelist are leaving few sorts of characters or illustrious for the poor surviving ghosts of the great departed to cower beneath in these latter days.

WE WERE ONCE taught to reverence Governor Washington. We firmly believed in his infallible habit of truthfulness, and that he prayed before battle and returned thanks for victory. And when he never had a hatchet, he never told the truth—that is to say not on the occasion of the cherry tree incident; and that he used to sneeze occasionally. Worse than all this are some of the things that are said to have happened to him. Dear dear! What a pity that the fact of being a people's hero should not be a sufficient reason for being allowed to rest in peace. To be sure their souls are preserved elsewhere, but the biographer and the novelist are leaving few sorts of characters or illustrious for the poor surviving ghosts of the great departed to cower beneath in these latter days.

ABOUT A MONTH ago the independent telephone interests of the state were nearly paralyzed by the news that the company in Detroit had been sold to the Erie company and would be consolidated with the Michigan. The sale was under the special auspices of Governor Pinrose, with a capital of \$1,000,000, and through Pinrose's influence the management was placed with men known politically as "the Pinrose push." Not in a single instance did the old company reduce its rates until competition actually appeared.

In this city, when the Citizens' company had become established the Michigan company for a time laid low in the hope that the storm would blow over and the field again become clear. It offered free resident phones to any who would send in applications and made special discounts for office connections. But with 500 stockholders in town, these inducements were not strong enough to win away the Citizens' patrons. Finding these tactics did not work, the Michigan company began plans for an aggressive campaign to recapture the field. A special telephone building was erected, the wires were laid in conduits instead of strung on poles and new and improved boards and instruments were used. The efforts to gain subscribers were redoubled and almost any kind of a service could be had at almost any kind of a price. During these operations the company was saying little, but it was steadily getting ready for a battle.

DETROIT DEAL WENT THROUGH. After the Detroit deal went through the independent companies held a convention in this city to devise ways and means to resist the aggressive policy of the Michigan company, and an agreement was signed by all the companies represented not to sell under any circumstances to the Michigan company without advising the independents that negotiations were in progress and giving them a chance to buy the company. This had this agreement been signed when the announcement was made that the Kalamazoo company had been gathered into the Erie fold, The Citizens' company of this city, endeavored to head off the deal, but the negotiations were so far advanced that the company was out of the market. A few days later the Erie company announced that a controlling interest in the Muskegon company had been acquired, and this was described as the most important step in the plan to take

MICHIGAN'S LIVELY TELEPHONE FIGHT

AN OBJECT LESSON IN GRAND RAPIDS.

Independents Threatened with Loss of Field After Years of Strife. Fooled Their Stock to Prevent Its Sale—Now It Is a Battle to the Death—How It Affects the Public.

From a Grand Rapids Dispatch to the Chicago Record.

Grand Rapids is the center of a telephone fight which promises to be a finish. The rivals are the Michigan company, now a part of the Erie system, and the Citizens' company of Grand Rapids. The Citizens' company held the independent telephone companies of the state, and it is the avowed intention of the independent companies to either cripple the Erie company in this state or to bring it to terms.

The fight began five years ago when the Michigan company had a monopoly of the telephone field. With a monopoly its rule was autocratic, with high rates for service, service none too good and extra charges for any favors that might be asked for. When the telephone patents expired the cry went up for reduction in telephone rates. The demand not only here but in other towns was refused with emphasis and in a manner to give deep offense to the business interests. In this city to resent the policy of the old company, the Citizens' company was organized, and not until the Citizens' company was ready to do business, with plant installed and rates just one-half of what the old company had been charging, did the latter make the slightest concession. When the competition materialized the Michigan company reduced rates to meet the competition, and it was openly admitted as soon as the competition disappeared the old rates would be restored.

The Citizens' company, made up entirely of local stockholders, prospered from the very beginning. It had no bonded indebtedness, and its \$1,000,000 capital was distributed among nearly five hundred holders in amounts ranging from \$25 upward, very few holding as high as \$5,000. These stockholders were business men and small capitalists, some putting in their money as an investment, others to help along an enterprise which would relieve them of the exactions of the monopoly. This local interest was one of the strongest elements in the success of the new company and has contributed materially to the ability of the company to pay regular quarterly dividends of 2 per cent.

OTHER CITIES ORGANIZED.

The success of the Citizens' company here encouraged other cities to organize independent companies. Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Battle Creek and other towns established exchanges of their own, and as the local exchanges were established toll lines were extended to connect them. An independent company was organized in Detroit under the special auspices of Governor Pinrose, with a capital of \$1,000,000, and through Pinrose's influence the management was placed with men known politically as "the Pinrose push." Not in a single instance did the old company reduce its rates until competition actually appeared.

PERSONALITIES. Somebody told ex-Speaker Reed the other day of the rumor that a Western congressman was writing a novel with a woman in it. "It will make about as good reading as the register of a Mill Hotel," said Mr. Reed. W. H. Duffell, of Springfield, sent Senator Cullom a cavel made of wood from the elm tree in front of the residence of Abraham Lincoln at Springfield, generally believed to have been planted by the emancipator. That portion of the cavel which is made of walnut is from the old state railing of the state house, now used as the Sanjour court house. The handle is made of white laths from the Lincoln home.

Queen Victoria attributes her long life and excellent health largely to her practice of spending as much time as possible in the open air every day. In her youth riding was her favorite recreation, and in Scotland she has almost lived on pony-back. Now, of course, carriage exercise has taken its place. Every morning her majesty goes out in her little pony chair, often visiting the farm and stables in the course of her drive.

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yet received. The Citizens' of this city took prompt action, and, as a result, instead of the Muskegon company becoming the property of the Erie it was turned over to the Citizens' company. These three transactions were explained with a great flourish of trumpets for the purpose of creating a panic among the other independent companies and bringing them to a selling mood. They were assured that several other companies were negotiating, and that in another sixty days independent stock would be far below par, because, with several exchanges gone, those that remained would be too isolated to do business other than purely local. In this city every effort was made to stampede the stockholders of the Citizens' company to unload while it was yet time, and half a dozen brokers were out picking up all that could be shaken out by the panic. The Citizens' company called a special meeting of its stockholders to counteract this raid, and at this meeting the capitalization was increased to \$500,000, and then it was voted to pool the stock as a safeguard against the purchase of the stock in the open market. James M. Barnett, Lester J. Rindge and E. A. Stowe were made trustees, and the old National bank was made transfer agent for the pool. About 75 per cent. of the stock has entered into the pooling arrangement.

POOLED THEIR STOCK.

Having increased its capital and pooled the stock, the Citizens' company, feeling secure against any further raids, will in turn become aggressive, and this movement, though just started, is rapidly assuming proportions. The Citizens' stockholders are using their influence, not only here, but wherever the independent companies have been established to have the Michigan company's telephones thrown out, whether any charges is made for the service or not. In Muskegon the Retail Grocers' association and the chamber of commerce have taken the matter in hand, the Michigan company's telephones being done along the same line, with some of the most prominent business men in town pushing it.

The independent companies of the state have perfected their organization, with all the companies in it except Detroit and Kalamazoo. It is probable the stock in the different companies will be pooled, as has been done in the Citizens' of this city, as a safeguard against any more sales. The fight during the next six months will be fast and furious, with the independent companies standing together, backed by local sentiment in each instance. If the Erie company desires again to control the Michigan field the terms will be to purchase the entire independent outfit and to come under local ordinances. It is the last proposition the Erie company will oppose the most, as for local ordinance it has no use.

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FINLEY'S FOULARD SILKS AND CHALLIES

We have just opened our spring line of New Fouldars, and take pleasure in calling your attention to the same, representing, as they do, the CREAM of the best manufacturers' line for 1900. Differing from last season when most everything shown was in Blacks and Navys, this season's line comes in colors and shades more appropriate for a summer garment and comprises the New Blues, Greys, Heliotropes, Fawns, etc., etc., both in the "Natural Foulard" and "Liberty Satin" finish.

Our Challies Are too handsome to describe and our assortment NOW is far more extensive than in any season heretofore, but on account of the scarcity in all the finer grades, this condition will only last for a limited time, and early buyers will get by far the best selection. See our exhibit this week.

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